[P. 1959] Chuckchansi

882 After a girl had reached adolescence, she stayed close to home or companions. Undesired sexual intercourse was feared, and the independent attentions of young men were discouraged, apparently. A girl was expected to remain in the heart of her family "until her mother-in-law came after her."

● 864 "The mother would tell the girl about having babies when she was small," said N.W. [Presumably the lore, so to say; there was no concealment of sex in this intimately housed society. -- A.H.G.]

Marriage

584 Arrangements for matrimony were normally made by a young man's parents. Sometimes a man could buy a baby girl for a future wife; when she matured, she would have to marry him. Shamans frequently secured women merely by threatening them with sickness or death.

A boy's family would decide upon a girl for their future daughter-in-law -- the mother's choice, usually. The girl would be the same age as the youth or a bit younger; she might be thirteen or fourteen years old. These young persons had to marry whether they wanted to or not, said N.W. (Yet her own experience makes it clear there were exceptions. Perhaps if her parents had been living, she would have had to marry the man she refused.) 583 Money and other gifts were bestowed on the girl's family by the boy's parents. By accepting or even touching these the girl bound herself to marry the young man. The average amount of money paid for a girl, whether by parents or a man acting for himself, was 20 strings of the long cylindrical beads called humna; these totaled about 120 individual beads, each string being the length of the circumference of a hand. If the girl's family wished to withdraw from the agreement before the wedding, they were expected to return the money and other gifts. However, sometimes it happened that the money could not be returned "even if they did ask, because it was already spent."

In N.W.'s case, a man had given clothes, beads, rings, and baskets for her, which her elder sister, in lieu of parents, had accepted. These N.W. refused to touch. She knew what kind of a man he was: "he had been married before and all." She would have to marry him if she had taken any of those things. The man's mother then tried to take back the things, but N.W.'s sister declined to return them claiming "it was the man's and mother's own fault, because the man had given them to Nancy, but she wouldn't take them, wouldn't touch them." Meanwhile N.W. married another man named Mike. Then the rejected man's mother came and tried